Talks on Expression

BY

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Foreword

IT is admittedly true that the methods and processes of education are really successful when they serve to clarify thought — and then only.

Learning cannot be "plastered on"; real knowledge cannot even be imparted, but thought *can be clarified.*

This of course follows the premise that every individual possesses at the outset, in his own right, all the knowledge he will ever express. Hence educational systems at their utmost can do no more than clear away the débris of false or hazy thinking and awaken the student to a realization of his inherent birthright of intelligence.

But this is the greatest service possible. Mankind instinctively rises to bless, as its real benefactors, the men and women who through the clarity of their own vision have dissipated the confusion and darkness which were puzzling and halting the aspiration of the people.

There are a few great figures in the world

of science, another group in the realm of religion, still another in the field of art, whom the race remembers with gratitude because they succeeded in educating their fellows into a clearer view of the realities. They had, in their respective spheres, clarified the thought of men.

Having been intimately associated with the author of this little book and having known, first hand, the confusion into which most of the thought regarding the art of the Spoken Word had fallen before he undertook to clarify it, I crave the privilege of voicing, not alone my own appreciation, but the gratitude of thousands who through this man's clear vision have found the way.

It is a cause for satisfaction, deep and sincere, that Leland Powers has been persuaded to put into print his unique and scientific understanding which, worked out in practice, has made him for the past twenty years, the recognized standard for all who aspire to eminence in the art of the Spoken Word.

PHIDELAH RICE, JR.

The Scientific Side of Expression

EXPRESSION to be in the realm of art must first or last reach that realm by the path of science. Consequently in the art of the Spoken Word the processes, in order to be art processes, must first become conscious processes. The "how" and the "why" as well as the "what" must be recognized and understood before the art stage is reached.

In order to scientifically understand any manifestation, the nature of its cause must be understood, and the laws by which the cause embodies itself must be recognized.

Back of all expression there are three activities at work as cause. And these three activities are three factors of one complete trinity, the mind. These factors are, first, the *mental concept* which gives birth to the desire to express; second, the *desire* which

gives birth to the impulse to express; and third, the *ability* or life which carries the impulse into expression. These three activities are co-essential, co-existent and co-operative. None of them can exist in its wholeness without the other two and each one exists in the other two. I repeat, they are three activities of one thing, the mind.

The cause, therefore, of right expression is mental. Right expression is an act of the mind and it contains its own proofs that it is so. If a mind-action or thought-process falls short of expression it is because its third factor is dormant or has been overdominated by one or both of the other factors and so the thought-process is left unfinished and unsymmetrical. Complete thought-action, or understanding, comes only from carrying the conception through desire or purpose into action, or demonstration — the actual doing or living the truth. This must be so because the very mind-activity employed in carrying purpose into actual performance is itself a necessary part of the understanding process,

and if it does not take part and the conception is not carried into performance, then an important and component factor of complete understanding has been left dormant and unenlisted and so only partial understanding can have been experienced.

In an address delivered at the Commencement exercises at Wellesley College in 1914, Mr. John H. Finley, Commissioner of Education in the state of New York, said: "I have attempted a catalogue of those who do not tell the truth; first are those who do not know the truth and tell it, if ever, by accident; second are those who know the truth, but, knowing it, have no wish to tell it or refuse to tell it; and third are those who know the truth, or who know it vaguely, and who desire to tell it, but know not how to tell it. These intimate the three ends of education: to know the truth, to be willing to tell it, and then *to be able to speak it.*" (The italics are mine.)

Conventional methods of education, dealing as they do with the science of the reflective

process of the thought (the finding out of the truth), and the choosing process (the desire to tell the truth), and leaving undealt-with the science of the *act* or the expressive process (the ability to speak the truth), are really training but two-thirds of the mind-entity. The reflective, analytical process is trained; the ethical, volitional, choosing process is trained; a proper consciousness of right and wrong, of what is worthy, high and fine as opposed to what is unworthy and undesirable, is cultivated; laws relating to these two processes have been discovered, formulated and taught, and a student is trained to that extent according to scientific methods. In the third process, that of bringing concept and purpose into working contact with the world of other men, which surely is the end desired, the student's mind is too often left untrained and uncultivated.

The thought thus two-thirds trained does force for itself an expression, an embodiment; it is bound to do so or it would be but a lazy, boneless, lifeless dream or sentiment; but

the *birth*, — the taking on an embodiment, — the final, vital act of the thought's coming out into the world as an entity and living force, in other words, the *speaking* of the truth, has had little scientific help from conventional training and education in colleges and universities.

It seems that no governing laws have been thought to be existent or necessary for the training of the expressional function of the mind. The teaching of expression along scientific lines and methods finds no place in most of the universities. The reason may be that it is not generally known that expression has its science. It is generally thought that the expressional process is a natural process and will take care of itself. As to that, so are thinking and choosing natural processes, but they cannot be left without training; they are carefully looked after and scientifically trained, but the third factor of the thought — the expressional — is generally left to shift for itself, to work with dull, awkward, disobedient tools, to learn in

the wasteful school of experience. We are taught how to think *in* and how to think *around* and *about* but we are not taught how to think *out*.

The questions arise: can expression be taught scientifically, and what principles have been discovered and what laws uncovered in this realm of conscious expression.

This principle has been discovered: — in right expression, not only is the cause, the starting point, in mind, but that fact *must be evident in the expressional act.* In expression all causation is mental and consequently *all expression is mental.*

In the present stage of our development the mind, in its expressional act, uses body or material for the embodiment of its ideas, and here arises the conflict and the necessity of knowing the law in order to obey it. This body, which in our special art the thought uses in its manifestation, makes a claim to an existence of its own apart from its master, the mind. It claims to have life and sensation

springing from its own nerve-centers. It claims to be an animal and it rebelliously insists on expressing its own life and sensation, whether or not the expression interferes with and belies the plan and purpose of the rightful master, mind.

If this servant, the body, and by body I mean voice and body, were absolutely obedient and fluid to the vitalized thought, our brother to whom we desire to communicate our spiritual vision would be conscious of the body only as a component part of the informing thought. In other words, the body, in proportion as it is trained to give up its own claims and become obedient to right mind-action, gets away from between the thought of the speaker and the thought of the listener, tends to become transparent, to take on the form of the thought, and hence to disappear, instead of forcing thought's expression awry, twisting and deforming it, forcing it through clogged and constricted channels to a false expression.

The latest work being done in the science

of expression has grown out of the recognition of this struggle between the *real vitality* of the *thought* and the *mock vitality* of the *mock thought* and the drawing of a distinguishing line between the two.

It must be remembered that mock vitality is nothing more than excitement and the mock thought nothing else than sensation.

I have found in my experience that the counterfeits are quite generally mistaken, even by intelligent people, for the real thing. It is not easy to distinguish in every case between them. It is by their effects that a listener can distinguish the real from the counterfeit. Right expression, the act of the intelligence, awakens *thought* in the listener's mind. Wrong expression, the act of sensation, or mock-mind, excites the listener, inhibits his clear thought and leaves him with a sense of fatigue.

The recognition and acknowledgment of this strife between the real mentality and the counterfeit at once draws a line along one

side or the other of which must be ranged all the theories and methods of teaching art.

The problem which confronts us in the study of expression from a scientific standpoint is, how to be able to recognize the innumerable claims which the body makes that its motions, forms and sounds are the language of right mind-action, and to promptly place them where they belong, as the actions of the mock-mind resident in nerve centers and sensation.

In order to illustrate I will take a concrete example: — I am an orator standing before my audience. I know surely one thing; I desire to communicate through my speech and action a thought and a purpose so that a thought and a purpose may be awakened in the mind of the hearer. In order to be right, my thought must be clear and my purpose unselfish. The scientific relation of the obedient body to a consciousness of clear thought and unselfish purpose is absolute poise and repose; not the poise and repose of an ox in his stall but of the soaring eagle. That is the law. It is my problem, as an intelligent

orator, to see that my body obeys it. If now I find I am standing on both feet separated far enough to make a broad base, I can know that however clearly my words are stating my thought and however sympathetically my voice is sounding my purpose, my body is speaking its own claim that inertia is poise and repose, and that firmness of establishment depends upon the breadth of base. That is the material belief; that is why, probably, an animal feels safer on four legs than on two. The resort to broad base is always the indication of physical weakness, or of the belief that power resides in the earth, so to speak; that it is antagonistic and must be resisted. Spiritual understanding realizes that all power is from above, and that it is infinite and loving, surrounding and upholding. Intelligent thought *realizes power;* non-intelligent sensation *fears* power and resists it. The first is symbolized in attitude by the narrow base. The second by the broad base.

Again: — if I find I am constantly changing

my weight from one foot to the other, my body is saying that nervousness is vitality of thought. If I find my muscles tense and rigid, my body is claiming that power is in muscle.

The untrained body, left to itself, will always express its own excitements and sensations instead of allowing the rightful embodiment and expression of the mind's plan and purpose. This fact must be faced if expression is to be scientifically taught.

To summarize: — Right expression has its beginning in mentality and makes its appeal to thought. Wrong expression has its beginning in sensation and makes its appeal to sensation. Wrong expression is not so much the opposite of right expression as it is its counterfeit. It is using nerve-excitement in place of dynamic thought. It is mistaking reflex action for thinking and feeling, and muscular tension for spiritual power.

If we claim there is a science of expression it means that we claim there have been discovered certain fundamental laws in accord-

ance with which an individual can be trained to distinguish between the true and false in causation, and to know the steps by which he has arrived, or can arrive, at the desired end in expression; which end is, that the vitality of his thought, the embodiment of his purpose, be not interfered with by any material obstruction.

The study of the science of right expression is the effort to learn the laws which govern the outgoing act — the expressive act — of the thought; to learn the laws which govern embodiment, and to learn to distinguish between the thought's vitality and the body's sensation or nerve excitement: it is the effort to clearly understand what the *thought wants to do* and to distinguish between the "want to do" of the thought and the "want to do" of the body. The first is the immediate cause of all right expression; the second is the cause of wrong expression, whether in life or in art.

This "want to do" of the body necessitates another effort on the part of the student of

right and intelligent expression, viz., to train the body to obey the laws of the outgoing thought so that it will reflect the thought's form and embody the mind's act.

Vitality of Thought

IS it not true, that thought, however high, however spiritual, serves no end nor nobody, not even the thinker, until it is dynamic enough to express itself? Thought is not recognizable, its existence even cannot be proven until it realizes its power and proves its power by embodying itself. This embodying process is just as much a mental function as the thinking; it is thought manifesting its life, proving its ability — its vitality. Every printed page, great sermon, picture, statue, symphony, cathedral, is the realization and proof of the *vitality* of some one man's thought.

The man who stood looking at Saint Paul's Cathedral in London and exclaimed, "Just think! All this was once just lines on a piece of paper!" might have gone one step further and said, "All this was once just a thought in some one man's mind." Here is the point: this thought, first as an unoutlined concept in one man's mind, then as lines on a piece of

paper and at last the gigantic cathedral, possessed in the beginning and all the time a certain something, a certain dynamic function by virtue of which it was able *to make itself visible.*

But what of the inarticulate souls? What of the "dumb, inglorious Miltons," the men to whom great visions come, but who are never able to embody the vision? Think of the poems dreamed but never written; the sermons planned but never preached; the good deeds willed but never performed! Why? Because of the seeming lack of that same certain something, that dynamic function without which the thought is never a whole thought, never a completed thing.

Expression is thought completing itself — a mental act altogether. I was about to say, expression is thought completed, but to my understanding the thought is not completed until its expression has awakened thought in the other man's mind. Even then it is only on the way.

It might be interesting now to ask, — is

this certain, dynamic something which was present in the thought of the man who could build a cathedral, and seemingly absent in the thought of most of us, really absent or is it just dormant and undeveloped? And if it be present but dormant and undeveloped can it be awakened and developed so that your thought and my thought may at last embody themselves in terms of harmony and power? And is the training worth while? To answer the last question first, it surely is worth while, if any kind of mental training is worth while. The development, by some means or other, of this *vitality* of the thought, is essential if the whole thought is ever to be available and effective. The end reached may not be the ability to carve a statue, write a book, compose a symphony, but the end in view is to render the individual able to bring his mental and moral resources into effective relation to the world of other men, whatever may be the nature of the individual's activity; and the bringing about of this desirable result with the least waste of power, and the clearing

and straightening of the channel of the outgoing thought, so that its plan may not be distorted nor its purpose obstructed, is an end to be reached only by the scientific training of the *expressional function* of the thought. If that end can be attained, the scientific training is decidedly worth while.

It used to be thought and taught that although concept and purpose were activities of the mind and the sources of all expression, yet, when it came to the expressional act, that particular function fell outside the mind's province and belonged entirely to the physical activity. Expression is, however, a mental activity. It exists because thought exists. Without thought there can be no right expression and, conversely, without expression there can be no complete thought. Expression is not the *effect* of the thought; it is thought's *effectivity;* it is the thought in its vital, culminating flower, demonstrating and proving its own existence. The sun furnishes an excellent illustration or figure. The sun's rays are its expression; its only means of proving

its existence. Light rays, heat rays, actinic rays are not effects of the sun, they are the sun's effectivity. The effect is produced by them. So the thought's expression, instead of being an effect, is the function of the thought which produces the effect.

As has been before stated, the thought's trinity can be considered simply as follows:

1. The reflective, intellectual function, . . . which conceives and plans.
2. The affective, volitional function, . . . which chooses and decides.
3. The effective, vital function, . . . which carries into expression the decision and plan.

These three factors are co-essential, co-existent, and co-operative. They form one whole mind-activity.

In some mentalities the expressive function may be partially dormant, or undeveloped; in another mentality the reflective, or the affective factor, may be partially dormant or undeveloped, but if the individual be capable

of any thought whatever, all three factors are there.

In every whole mind-action the three factors are taking part, one dominant and the other two subordinate. In different individuals different factors are habitually dominant, and this fact is the reason why one individual is said to be a man of reflection, another a man of impulse, while the third is called a man of action.

In symmetrical, right activity, whether in art, religion, daily living and work, in whatever field of activity one finds his expression, the whole thought, in its three introactive functions, must find itself embodied and reflected. When the thought has thus proved its existence and vitality, the *reflective factor* indicates its presence by the fact that the expression has a recognizable form, shape and *plan,* whether the expression be a poem, a bridge, a painting, whether it be teaching, acting, living; without form and plan there is, in the expression, no proof of intelligence.

The *affective factor* indicates its presence

by the fact that the expression has unfoldment-in-sequence, or *purposeful harmony,* that the shape is symmetrical, and that the *plan* shows an end in view and *unfolds* to that end.

The *vital factor* indicates its presence by the expression as a whole, the demonstrated *ability* to carry the *plan* and *purpose* into fulfillment.

A WHOLE THOUGHT is dynamic, creative. It can remove mountains, dig canals, discover continents, redeem the world.

POINTS

1. There is a certain function of thought that may be called the thought's *vitality* — ability to *do.*
2. This function can be awakened and trained.
3. Training and development come through practice rightly directed.
4. This right direction depends upon the recognition and application of a principle; also the recognition of the difference between sensation and *vital thought* as the cause of expression.

Media

EVERY thought, in order to prove its existence, is obliged to overcome and master material in some form or other. Thought in its expressive act, making its appeal to intelligence, does so *in spite of material, never with its willing aid.*

When thought does seize on material and fuse it into embodiment the proof that it is right thought and right expression is that the media used, whether spoken words, the printed page, paint and canvas, marble or the voice and body, cease to be apparent as material; they become transparent, they disappear, just as the surface of a good mirror disappears, giving place to the reflected image.

The material medium in right expression gets out of the way, ceases to obtrude, just in degree as it is correctly and deftly used. In other words, — just in degree as it is obedient to its rightful master, the mind. When rightfully mastered and obedient the mate-

rial medium becomes de-materialized; it becomes the "outer end" of the active, recognizable thought; it is expression. Expression is not the material medium in action it is vital thought de-materializing the intervening, interfering material. The material medium of itself is always, either passively or actively, resistant to right expression.

In the case of the sculptor and his marble block the passive resistance is obvious. Imbedded in the block the sculptor sees his angel imprisoned. The marble does not want to yield her up. It knows nothing of any angel. It knows only marble and doesn't want to be broken. But the sculptor hammers it, chisels it, rubs it and polishes it, does away with every bit of superfluous, interfering marble, until at last the angel stands free, no longer marble to the intelligent gaze of the observer but the sculptor's vision embodied.

In serving the idea marble became transfigured.

In our own field of expression, The Spoken

Word, where the material media are the living voice and the animate body, it would seem that these, surely, must be fluidly responsive to every varying phase of intelligence and artistic purpose. The truth is, however, that only as the voice and body are coerced and trained into obedience to vitalized thought and only as the expressional function of the mind is awakened and trained to command and handle the voice and body correctly and deftly, do they do anything but interfere with the mental concept and purpose. In their untrained states, the voice and body are the most rebellious and deceitful of all the media right expression has to employ. The more they are freed in their own physical realm, without the government of intelligence being established, the more obstructive they become to right expression.

The cause of this is, as has been stated in another chapter, but which cannot be repeated too often; this living instrument seems to insist on having an intelligence and power of its own, an intelligence resident

in its own nerve-centers and a power in its muscular tensions, and this counterfeit intelligence is forever trying to hypnotize both speaker and hearer into mistaking it for real intelligence and is so often successful, on the stage, in the pulpit, at the bar, on the public platform, that oratory, thus misconceived, has fallen into disrepute and rightly so. The orator's power has come to be associated too much with physical excitement and too little with dynamic thought. Public speakers are too often content to make this physical appeal. It is sometimes cloaked with the name, personal magnetism. It is a physical appeal to a physical response. Speakers who depend on this animal activity for power, must be classed with the colored preacher who possessed a wonderful ability to throw his congregation into spasms of religious ecstasy. When asked to explain his method he said: — "Well, sah, after I have chosen mah tex' and arranged mah remahks, I goes out into the back yahd an' expouns the sermon to my dawg. I tries it over in different tones of

voice, and when I gets it worked up to that extent that it keeps the dawg howlin', then I knows that the power of the sperit is with me."

True efficiency in a public speaker is not measured by the amount of excitement he can create but rather by the amount of thinking he can awaken in the audience.

Real vitality of thought clarifies and vivifies the expressive form but never destroys it. Physical excitement, which is the counterfeit of vitality of thought, tends to straighten and elongate all expressive form and thus destroys it. It is an enemy to intelligent expression.

The right mind always wants the body and voice to do the right thing in expression, and whenever they obey this want, whether in their trained or untrained conditions, the mind of the auditor recognizes it as right, and that his intelligence is being addressed. That is because the mind's way is the universal way and can always be recognized by mind.

Right expression always carries with it a revelation that intelligence is obtaining the mastery over that which is the remnant of

the tiger and the ape in human nature. The struggle is always going on, and every bit of expression, right or wrong, shows which is holding the upper hand, the intelligence or the animal.

It is a common but erroneous belief that mind can think and mind can feel but that mind cannot *act,* cannot *express;* that it has no life of its own and consequently that the body is necessary in expression in order to supply the life, the energy. A sort of partnership is thus erroneously supposed to exist between the mind and the body, a sort of division of labor. The right understanding, however, is that intelligence does not recognize the material body in right expression; the material senses recognize it but the mind recognizes only *embodiment of idea.* The body becomes the embodiment when it absolutely obeys the command of thought and does not allow its own sensations and nerve excitements to be in any way its masters.

In and of themselves, voice and body in right expression, are nothing but obstructions:

only as they serve the idea do they get out of the way. Any more voice than is required for the full expression of the thought and feeling is too much, and interferes with right expression almost as much as too little.

However graceful the body or beautiful the voice, if the attention of the auditor is held by this beauty and grace, as being something separate from the truth expressed, in just that degree are the voice and body obstructive and disobedient. It would be as if the surface of a statue were so highly polished as to distract the eye from the sculptor's living thought. Voice, body, marble must serve the idea; then they are redeemed; then they disappear as material and serve in the house of the Lord.

If the belief prevail that the embodiment in any art is anything in and of itself, if a separation be made between the concept and the expression, then the art tends towards decadence. When art in any subtle way works toward degeneracy it is when the beauty of the embodiment is worshipped

rather than the spirit which produced it; when the form is looked on as possessing the intelligence of which it is only the symbol; when the effect is looked upon as the cause; when the appeal is made to the emotions rather than the intelligence.

The Speaking Voice

IT is my belief and understanding that the good voice is possible for, and latent in, every individual. I believe the good voice is the real voice.

Nothing is so helpful to the voice-student as this understanding; that the good voice is his and already in his possession, latent, locked up, tied up, buried, hidden, but waiting to be liberated; and that the processes of education and training are the untying and unlocking and clearing away of obstructions and the opening of channels; that it is all a process of discovery, or of coming into one's inheritance; not a reaching out after something to attach to one's equipment; not a process of acquirement, but a process of freeing.

The good voice is the expression of the true self. The habitual voice is the expression of the habitual self. "Habitual" should not be confused with "natural." Nature, correctly interpreted, is right and harmonious

and works according to law. Habit may be right and may be wrong. Furthermore, our habitual voices not only express our own mistakes but also the mistakes and habits of thought of our grandparents, neighbors, environment, occupation and opinions: not only our own opinions but inherited opinions and opinions of opinions.

The good voice expresses understanding; the faulty voice, habit or opinion. Faults of voice are, in their origin, the outgrowths of some kind of *fear.* They are caused in the beginning by some non-understanding or misunderstanding of power and later are continued or induced by some misconception, misdirection or misapplication of power. Fear is the result of the misunderstanding of power, and faults of voice become fastened on us in childhood before we know anything about power except as something which makes us do what we don't want to, and something which we cannot successfully resist, but which we might, if we were cunning enough, hide from or elude. Consequently the nasal voice,

which is elementally a whine, the flat voice, which came originally from shrinking from struggle, the high voice, which came in childhood from fear of the hopelessness of its protest against power, and the constricted voice, which was born in childish petulance and anger, are all accepted later as our natural voices.

The man who believes that power resides in physical strength must change his mind before he can come into his good voice. If he himself possesses physical strength he will think power resides in his own person and he may develop a strong voice and a loud voice but not one capable of interpreting or inspiring spiritualized thought. Or he may be a physically weak man; in that case he will imagine power resides in other men but not in himself, and will resent power, fear power, envy power, or feel that he can only unsuccessfully resist power. His voice will probably be either weak, nasal, high-pitched or constricted, not because of the fact that he is physically weak, but because he believes

power to reside in physical strength instead of spirit.

The enlightened mind interprets power in terms of freedom — broadening of horizon, heightening of zenith. Right thought *realizes* power instead of fearing it. It sees power as beneficent rather than malignant; not as something that overthrows but that surrounds and uplifts. The unenlightened thought resists power because it fears. The enlightened thought utilizes, manifests and embodies power because it understands.

Fear, either conscious, unconscious or subconscious, is the fundamental basis of such wrong mind-actions as bashfulness, self-consciousness, envy, emulation, hypocrisy, suspicion, discontent, anxiety, conceit, etc. The physical signs and effects of these wrong states of mind are: relaxed or contracted chest, shallow or clavicular breathing, rigid face muscles, tight upper lip, pinched nostrils, constricted throat, inert soft-palate.

Fear reverses all intelligent processes. Every one of the physical conditions men-

tioned above is exactly contrary to what is necessary for proper voice production. The good voice requires an expanded torso and deep breathing: fear contracts the chest and shortens the breath. The good voice requires free and flexible face muscles: fear freezes them. The good voice insists on an open throat: fear clutches the throat and constricts all the breath channels. The effects of fear, ignorance and hypocrisy on the muscles of the body are unavoidable and unconcealable, and the quality of the voice is the betrayer and interpreter, beyond the control of the speaker, of these conditions of thought. A perfectly trained voice, with a mind of fear, ignorance and pretence, will unconsciously revert to the old falsity. Fear must be lost in the right understanding of power — that power is loving and casts out fear.

In freeing the voice of the student from wrong habits the teacher should be a keen detector of wrong habits of *thought* in the student. He should be alert to detect what

particular form of fear may have become habitual in the student. Self-consciousness is the usual form. Self-conceit is a form of fear and often bashfulness is a form of self-conceit. The wise teacher will kindly and patiently guide the student out of these mistaken mental attitudes. It is of first importance that a vocal ideal should be established in the student's mind; in his mind's ear he must hear the voice he hopes to have. As before said, nothing is so helpful to the student as to bring him to understand that this longed-for voice is his already, waiting to be freed and embodied. He must hear it, however, with his mind's ear. Sometimes he will recognize it in the voice of a great singer, or in some more-than-usual good tone in the voice of his teacher. He never recognizes it in anything that is mediocre: he recognizes it only in the voice that is so nearly ideal that it awakens his spiritual sense. This vocal ideal can be trusted to develop if only it be once awakened.

In the meantime the teacher will give the student such vocal exercises as necessitate

the reversal of whatever bad vocal habit is to be overcome, and will patiently and encouragingly show the student the way, making clear to him what the exercise is for and watching that it be practiced carefully and intelligently. The student can accomplish in one hour's practice with his thought clear as to just what he is trying to accomplish with the exercise, with his pattern held clearly before him in his mind's ear, than in days of mere "doing" the exercise with inattentive thought. Whenever a right tone is liberated the student's attention must instantly be called to it, and the difference between it and the habitually wrong tone be established, not only in the student's ear but also in his sense of the way he produces the two tones — the right and the wrong. He must patiently make the right way his habit and his intelligence must recognize what condition of thought accompanied the sense of right vocal production; at the same time his ear must recognize the right vocal sound.

It is doubtful if anything helpful can be

written about the definite exercises to be given to the student to overcome vocal faults and to develop right tone-production. Written directions are liable to misunderstanding and misapplication, however intelligent may be the reader and however carefully the writer may try to correctly describe and explain the exercises.

Many of the difficulties met in vocal training come from a belief on the student's part that his voice-consciousness should be in his throat. The result of such a belief is a muscularization of those parts of his throat which for right tone production should have only the sense of expanded openness. By turning the attention of the student away from his throat to breath-control and voice-support, which must take place at his diaphragm, his mind is rightly directed and a proper condition of throat more easily follows.

Right breath-control and voice-support are indispensable factors of right voice-production. Without them the throat inevitably takes upon itself the office of controlling the

breath, which office properly belongs to the diaphragm and the muscles of the torso.

Before the voice can be intelligently used as an interpreter of spiritualized thought, all the right habits of vocal production must be established. Nothing is so effective in confirming these right habits and leading the student into a full realization of the ideal voice as using it as the interpreter of the truth and beauty of good literature. Only after the adequate preliminary training and tuning of the vocal instrument, however, can the student be brought into a demonstrable understanding of the use of his voice as a medium of artistic expression. This second step in vocal education is more interesting perhaps, but not more important, than the first. The first calls for patience and abounds in drudgery; the second has the deep interest of discovery and brings with it a sense of coming into one's inheritance.

Let it be remembered that however beautiful and free and obedient the voice may be, if the possessor of the voice be not also

possessed of spiritual and intellectual life and culture, there will be nothing of value for the beautiful voice to express, nothing worthy of chosen expression. On the other hand, however high the purpose, however spiritualized the thought, however beautiful the vision, without the trained voice the revelation through the Spoken Word will be obstructed and imperfect.

If there be, indeed, a science of expression the fundamental laws must be found operative in every expressional act. The voice as an expression of the activity of the mind must manifest in itself the mind's trinity. Let me again state the fundamental principle of the science of expression. *Expression is a mind-activity and every expressional manifestation must prove that its cause and source are in mind.* In order to prove this the expressional manifestation must show the operation of another law, called the Law of Trinity, which may be stated as follows:

The whole thought or mind-action is a trinity, the three factors of which are:

1. Reflective Factor (Intellectual).
2. Affective Factor (Volitional).
3. Effective Factor (Vital).

This trinity proves itself in expression as follows:

1. Reflective Factor, in shape or form.
2. Affective Factor, in unfoldment-in-sequence.
3. Effective Factor, in ability to act: motion.

Voice, as expression, obeys the Law of Trinity as follows:

Intelligence is symbolized in and governs emphasis and inflection. (form)
Errors: — sharpness, high pitch, — arising from desire to argue and convince rather than to define and arrange in order.

Volition is symbolized in and governs melody, harmony, smoothness and flexibility. (unfoldment)
Errors: — too many curves, caused by over desire to please, hypocrisy, sentimentality.
Minor cadence — over desire for sympathy.

Vitality is symbolized in and governs freedom, fullness, range, rate, and resonance. (motion)

Errors: — loudness, roughness, monotony; all resulting from belief in power in muscle and life in body.

Voice itself, apart from words, is a member of another trinity, a trinity of languages, which, in our special art of the Spoken Word, the mind uses for its embodiment. The three factors of this trinity are

1. Words.
2. Voice or intonation.
3. Action.

1. Reflective Factor employs as its special language, *words* — voice showing *concepts* of thought.
2. Affective Factor employs as its special language *voice, intonation,* showing *feeling* produced by thought.
3. Effective Factor employs as its special language *action* — showing *energy* of thought and feeling.

Expressive Action

EVERY method of teaching expressive action today, unless it be so antiquated or so lacking of a scientific basis as to be not worth while, embodies more or less, or at least is tinged by, the discoveries and teachings of Francois Delsarte. Dr. Alger, in his Life of Forrest, says, "Delsarte toiled for forty years with unswerving zeal, to transform the bungling empiricism of the stage, into a perfect art growing out of a perfect science. . . . Art, Delsarte said, with his matchless precision of phrase, is feeling passed through thought and fixed in form."

Whatever were the faults and vagaries of his theory of expressive action, Delsarte made a tremendous advance in the teaching of the science and art of expression over anything that had been done before his day, and no advance has since been made that has not been mainly in the direction pointed out by him.

One of the universally accepted principles of all training in expression or in any department of human activity, was first discovered and formulated by Delsarte, namely, that beneath the vast myriad of accidental actions and combinations of actions, there are a few fundamental actions, which, if they could be established in habit, would not only correct all faulty action but would develop and free power; that in training for expression all exercises should be taken upon these few elementals; that practice of accidentals develops weakness and inefficiency.

Delsarte also formulated the following law: *The fundamental of all expressive position is poise. Poise is always unchangeable. The point of support may change with the varying state of emotion, but poise is never violated.* Any intelligent teaching of expressive action must be governed by an understanding of this law.

Delsarte taught that, in expressive attitude, there are possible but nine fundamental points of support, or centers of poise, and over each one of these centers of poise are grouped a

vast number of combinations of expressive combinations, almost without limit, but each distinctive group having the same fundamental root. Also that in all expressive action grace and distinction are dependent on the distinctiveness and control of elemental actions.

The three grand laws of expression, Trinity, Opposition and Evolution, are Delsartian, and they are accepted in all fields of art to be self-evidently true. In our art the disobedience of them, in any particular, at once results in awkwardness or affectation. Obedience to them causes the body to become transparent to thought-activity, and leads to freedom and spontaneity in all expressive action.

In considering the material human body as an expressional servant of the thought there are certain symbolisms and correspondences existing in its form and outline, which, when stated, at once seem true. For instance, Delsarte taught that the three factors of the thought's trinity, the mental, moral and vital, find themselves reflected in the three

factors of the human body's trinity, the head, the torso and the limbs; each one of these agents being the symbol and primary agent in expression of one of the thought-activities. They are alloted as follows:

1. Mental — has for its special agent *the head.*
2. Moral — has for its special agent *the torso.*
3. Vital — has for its special agent *the limbs.*

This correspondency seems obviously and interestingly true the moment it is brought to one's attention. Delsarte's explanation is, that as in mind the mental function perceives and guides, the moral impels and the vital supports and executes, so in body the head guides, the torso impels, and the limbs (legs) support and (arms) execute.

Undoubtedly the reason we so readily agree that the head is the agent of the mentality of the thought is on account of the common belief that the reflective process goes on in the head, just as it is commonly believed that the "love activity" goes on in the heart and

as the heart is in the torso, the torso seems to be the rightful agent of the moral factor of the mind; and as the physical ability to go and come, to support and execute, resides primarily in the limbs, that division of the human body, it is commonly believed, should be the particular agent of the vital factor of the thought.

One thing seems certain; — in our present state of spiritual development truth speaks to us in parables and symbols and awakens partial understanding to fuller understanding. Jesus found it necessary to teach spiritual truths by means of parables and thus found a gate-way through which Truth delivered the message which could be thus received and, in a measure, understood.

If we accept these symbols and correspondences taught by Delsarte in the sense of parables, and if they are not confounded with laws and principles, they can be used in art as something which enables it to carry truth through the blockade of the five senses to the thought on the other side.

It must be insisted on, that neither the physical form nor any of its parts has any power in expression to appeal to spiritualized thought, except as it becomes obedient to right mind.

Years of experience, patient study and observation have led me into the understanding of certain fundamental truths and their relation to art which I have endeavored to set forth in these pages, and which seem to me to differ vitally and basically from certain teachings of Delsarte, as far as I am conversant with them.

I am convinced that Delsarte confused *vitality of thought* with *sensation,* and that he believed the mind and the physical body to be in partnership. He states the mind's trinity as *reflective, affective* and *sensitive.* If one is to hold true to the understanding that the "mock-mind" of sensation is an enemy to right expression, and that expression is a mental proposition from beginning to end and takes place in spite of the material body, certain Delsartian points of view would have to be disputed.

To return to the subject of expressive action: — the body as a whole, and every one of its different agents of expression, have bearings, attitudes and inflections. Bearings indicate permanent conditions or habits of being, attitudes indicate temporary states of being, and inflections indicate passing, momentary phases of being.

Underlying all expressive bearings and attitudes of the body as a whole is the elemental idea of *poise;* that is, the proper relation of the mass of a body to its base. Material left to itself will constantly endeavor to broaden its base. It seems to recognize earth as its source and support, and to be impelled to return to it, and to flatten itself out as much as possible on the surface of the earth.

Spiritual intelligence recognizes that its source and support are from above, and whatever it governs it lifts into the position of uprightness.

The two elemental lines, the vertical and the horizontal, stand, in expression, for these

two conditions of consciousness. The vertical is the line of intelligent uprightness, of affirmation and of establishment of truth. The horizontal is the line of non-intelligent inertia, of negation and of overthrow.

The upright position is the symbol of mind-governed man; the horizontal, of mind-deserted material. All ignoble emotions tend to make the body depart from its upright position. All noble emotions and inspiring thoughts emphasize the body's uprightness and lessen its seeming dependence on the earth for support.

Fear and physical weakness employ certain identical signals, such as broad base, unsteady agents of support, trembling and bending. Fear and physical weakness, when they are temporary states of being, are expressed in temporary attitudes rather than in habitual bearings. It is the habitual condition of the mind which is symbolized in the habitual bearing of the body.

In passing from habitual bearing to temporary attitude of the body it is necessary to

begin with the elemental military attitude;—heels together, weight on both feet, body upright. The significance of this attitude is—readiness to obey,—to receive commands. It is the servant's attitude, the attitude of the inferior. Unless the weight can be changed to one foot, leaving the other free, the individual cannot change his base. A desire to advance will sway his body forward, a desire to retreat will sway his body back. But the weight held over both feet limits all expressive attitude of the body to that circumscribed realm.

If now the weight be taken on one foot and the free foot advanced or withdrawn, the attitude of the individual immediately assumes the expression of a person under command of his own will. His desire to advance carries his weight over his advanced foot, leaving the other foot free to carry still farther forward the now free and movable base. His desire to withdraw carries the weight over his back foot, leaving the other free to become a new base still farther back, etc.

The base composed of a supporting foot and a free foot, in combination with the elemental base, where the weight is on both feet, supplies a series of points of support which the three factors of the thought's trinity can use for their special symbols and combinations of symbols.

When the thought's *vitality* is dominant the obedient body symbolizes that state by advancing its weight over the advanced foot. When the thought's *reflectivity* is dominant that state is symbolized by the weight of the body being over the back foot. The *base,* in expressive attitude, has slight office in the expression of the *volitional* factor of the mind. That factor of the mind either likes or dislikes, either chooses or rejects, and the thought's choice or decision is registered at the base merely as a point of departure from one state of poise to another.

As attitudes over the feet express elementally the state of the *energy* of the thought, rather than the *plan* or *purpose,* the element of *motion* is more in evidence in the expression

than is the element of shape or *form.* This is, of course, because *motion* is the special symbol of *energy.*

Every attitude is fully expressive only as it indicates the *motion* employed to arrive at it.

It may be interesting now to note how *motion* itself obeys the law of trinity in that in its three essential directions — towards a center, about a center and away from a center — each of the three factors of the mind's trinity finds its own expressive symbol.

The reflective activity uses motion *towards a center.*

The affective activity uses motion *about a center.*

The effective activity uses motion *from a center.*

In all expressive attitudes the center of impulse to move should be in the chest. The order of unfoldment is as follows: expanded chest, attitude over foot, arm gesture, speech. Attitude should never follow arm gesture and neither attitude nor gesture should follow speech.

Awkwardness in attitude or gesture is due either to disobedience of the law of opposition and balance, or of the law of evolution or unfoldment-in-sequence.

What is here written about expressive action is not an attempt at more than the barest statement of two or three fundamental laws and their relation to the movement and attitudes of the body as a whole.

The purpose is to interest the reader in the fact that there are laws and principles underlying and governing *form, motion* and *unfoldment* and to lead him to discover by independent thought that these laws are universal and govern the movement of the solar system as well as the most elusive of the expressive movements of the head or the hand or the brow and that these laws are laws of mind and not of matter.

Laws of Expression

THE very word "Expression" not only states to our thought an idea, but paints a picture of an action — motion from within out. It states the idea of something hidden, invisible, moving out into visibility; of a something imprisoned using its prison-house as a means of coming out into recognized existence, forcing it (the prison-house) to take on the form and motion of the prisoner; to become his embodiment.

Still more interesting is the truth that this body, this prison-house, depends for its significance, its value, upon being so used by this something which is within or behind.

We have grown to speak of this invisible something which gives shape and motion and meaning to its prison-house, as being "within" or "behind," simply from the fact that it is invisible and intangible to the physical senses until its activities are pictured by an embodiment. By embodiment is meant any

and all activities which give the impression of *shape, motion and unfoldment.* One's objective thought has taken on its shape just in such a degree as one can define it, handle it, concentrate one's attention on it, arrest its motion, divide it, unfold its processes. It may be still unexpressed to the other man because it may not have "moved out" far enough. In order that another may feel, hear and see one's thought it seems necessary that the thought should seize upon material (body), and make it embodiment. If this embodiment be marble carved to the shape of one's thought, or if the embodiment be in the form and melodies of music, then we think of the invisible and intangible something as being *outside* the visible symbol and *reflected* by it. We think of the spiritual cause as being, not confined inside the form and giving it shape from within, but more as if the statue, painting or symphony were a mirror in which the spiritual activity were reflected; or as if the spiritual activity surrounded and outlined the symbol by dissolving away all that

was superfluous. Nevertheless we speak of all these acts of expression as the inner activity of the mind working out into visible or audible forms and motions. At once we find ourselves conceiving of two factors in expression, the inner and the outer, the invisible and the visible; and of these as being inseparable parts of one whole activity. The first we conceive as *cause,* the second as *manifestation.*

We understand that in expression all cause is in mind and all *manifestation* is in or through *form, motion* and *unfoldment.* Form, motion and unfoldment must never be accepted as cause nor must they be looked upon as effect; the effect takes place in the thought of the observer; they — form, motion and unfoldment — awaken thought and emotion only as they reflect the mind-action which produces them. Form, motion and unfoldment are ideas in mind. *Manifestation* is mental and is a trinity and can be resolved into its three factors or conditions, and although these factors, form, motion and unfoldment, are never *cause* in expression yet they awaken in the

observer, as I said before, the same mind-action of which they are the manifestation.

Form is recognized by the human consciousness as a manifestation of *plan* and speaks to the intellectual activity, or that part of the mind which *measures, enumerates, outlines, classifies* and *defines.*

Motion is recognized by the human consciousness as a manifestation of *energy* and appeals to that part of the mind which *acts, executes* and *demonstrates.*

Unfoldment is recognized as a manifestation of *purpose* and appeals to one's understanding of *good-will, love.*

A mind-activity does not embody itself except for the purpose of being understood, in order that a brotherhood of mind may be recognized. I, as the observer, find in my own consciousness a trinity of activities corresponding to the three kinds of appeal made by the expression. I find that I can think in the sense of *reflecting, defining* and *analyzing.* I find I can think in the sense of *liking, desiring, choosing, willing, loving.* I find I can

think in the sense of *executing, demonstrating, expressing.*

Let us call the first the *reflective,* or intellectual activity of the thought.

Let us call the second the *affective,* or volitional activity of the thought.

Let us call the third the *effective,* or the vital activity of the thought.

These three form a trinity — they are co-existent, co-essential and co-operative. This trinity is the causation of all right expressive manifestation; hence, logically, a trinity must be discovered in every manifestative phenomenon.

In all manifestative phenomena, whether in life or art, there are discoverable three fundamental laws which are so interlaced, inter-dependent, and introactive that they form a trinity, each one implying the other two and each one depending upon the other two for its wholeness and completeness. These laws are called the three grand laws of expression.

First, the Law of Trinity.

Second, the Law of Opposition or Balance. Third, the Law of Evolution.

The Law of Trinity. The three-fold activities of the thought are apparent in and govern all right expression as follows: the *reflective* activity governs and is expressed in the outline of the *form;* the *affective* activity governs and is expressed in the sense of a central starting point or impulse, the *unfoldment* from which results in the expressive form; the *vital* activity governs and is expressed in the *ability* and *adequacy* of the form to express the thought's purpose.

The Law of Opposition or Balance. Wholeness is an essential factor in all right expression and implies a recognizable center with all opposing sides balanced; thus proving in the expression a right and adequate intellectual *plan* and a proper measure of *energy* in the thought to unfold its *purpose* into a determined symmetrical and well-balanced form.

Note: Every expressive manifestation is rendered significant through the realization of its center. Without such a realization

the phenomenon seems to be a fragment without any expression of plan or purpose, consequently lacking wholeness and completeness.

The Law of Evolution. An expressive manifestation is significant only when it reflects the truth that its form is the result of a central impulse, born of a *purpose* and served by *energy* of thought sufficient to unfold it sequentially along a determined path or *plan* to a determined form.

Note applicable to all three laws: In every expressive manifestation there is reflected the *purpose* which gave birth to the impulse to express, the *conception* which gave birth to the purpose and which *planned* and guided and directed the expression, and the *energy* which carried the impulse into the form of expression determined and directed by the intellectual concept.

In the first law *plan* is primary and purpose and energy secondary.

In the second law *energy* is primary and plan and purpose secondary.

In the third law *purpose* is primary and plan and energy secondary.

COMPREHENSIVE LAW. *In right expression all causation is mental and the expression must prove it. All manifestation is in form, motion and unfoldment and is also mental.*

The fact that it is arbitrarily said that the above statements are laws is one thing; whether or not the reader of this book understands them to be laws is another. They surely are not laws for him until they are self-evident to his understanding. Laws cannot be theorized into existence nor argued into existence. If they are laws they are discoverable.

It has been my endeavor to so word my own thought that the thought of my reader might follow mine in its unfolding and thus we might together reach the same conclusion. If we can agree that the universe rightly understood is an expression of its Cause and that it reflects or indicates a certain method in this expression, and if we find that same method or activity or correspond-

ency, or whatever it might be termed, again manifested in our own minds or thought-processes and their expressional activities, then we can, I believe, accept this discovered method as obedient to universal law.

QUESTIONS ON THE FOREGOING CHAPTER

Question. — What is meant by *manifestation?*

Ans. — The outward sign of an inward activity; anything that seems to have form, motion and unfoldment.

Question. — Can a manifestation have one of these characteristics without having the other two?

Ans. — It cannot; these three outward signs are a trinity.

Question. — What is meant by a trinity?

Ans. — A whole made up of three essentials which are co-essential, co-existent and co-operative.

Question. — If the outward sign be a trinity

what must we conclude about the inward activity?

Ans. — That it also is a trinity.

Question. — Given the trinity, form, motion and unfoldment, can one trace back from them the nature of the trinity of which they are the sign?

Ans. — Yes, as follows: — form implies design, or plan, in the cause; design, or plan, implies wisdom or intelligence; hence, *wisdom* must be one of the characteristics of the cause. Motion, in the expression, implies energy in the cause, energy implies life or power; hence, *power* is another of the characteristics of the cause. Unfoldment, in the expression, implies in the cause a central impulse towards a fulfillment, which means a desire, or purpose, which means love. Hence, *love* must be the third

characteristic existent in the cause.

Question. — What then have we found to be the trinity existent in cause?

Ans. — Wisdom, love and power.

Question. — Does this trinity exist in matter or in mind?

Ans. — In mind. In reality these activities are spiritual, being attributes of God.

Question. — Is the trinity existent in nature, namely, form, motion and unfoldment, material?

Ans. — No, the factors of this trinity are ideas in mind; if their cause is mental they must also be mental.

Question. — Why is one logically certain that form, motion and unfoldment are members of a trinity?

Ans. — Because each one implies the other two and can be defined in terms of the other two, as follows: *Form* expresses the arrival, at de-

termined limits, of *motion* employed by an *unfoldment* beginning at a center.

Unfoldment expresses a central impulse employing *motion* to arrive at *form.*

Motion expresses the means a central impulse employs in its *unfoldment* to arrive at *form.*

Form

SURFACE is the plane of contact between an idea and its recognition by a human consciousness. It has length and breadth but no thickness apart from the volume of the idea of which it is the outline. It is the outward manifestation of the center's activity. When "surface" is thought of as being anything separate from the idea it outlines it must be thought of as having thickness, which is a contradiction of the thought of surface.

Outline is the recognition by a human consciousness of an intelligent plan inherent in the idea. *Center* is the recognition of a loving purpose or principle governing the idea and giving it wholeness. *Radius* is the recognition of life and power reflected in the idea and capable of carrying the loving purpose into fulfilment in the recognized plan.

Form, in reality, is an idea in mind and cannot be fixed in finite outline. "Form" is

the name we give to what takes place in our minds when we recognize an intelligent plan in an idea. What seems to the senses to be outline and surface of form, or in other words, shape, is in reality the limit of our understanding of the plan.

Shape, or form, seems to the physical senses to be finite; a definite thing outlined by our beliefs in regard to it. What is outside of our understanding seems not to exist. As our understanding grows the form seems to change or unfold. The form present in one's consciousness is forever made up of the fading presence of the one just gone before and the dawning presence of the one just to come.

Real form is spiritual and is outlined only by God himself. One's spiritual understanding must conceive of forms as being, in reality, unfoldments from centers of growth; always symmetrical, always whole and harmonious, but never finitely fixed in an unyielding outline.

In art "form" is never frozen into the fixity

and death of finiteness; it ever speaks of unfoldment; it is ever alive with the movement gone through as well as with the movement just begun and yet to come. Thought unfolds that way; so does a rose; so does civilization.

Rodin says in speaking of this truth: "It is in short a metamorphosis of this kind that the painter or sculptor effects in giving movement to his personages. He represents the transition from one pose to another; he indicates how insensibly the first glides into the second. In his work we still see a part of what was and we discover a part of what is to be."

Expression is the contact between an idea and its recognition, — not the *point* of contact but the contact itself. It is not a locality but an impact.

The desire for expression and the working out of that desire are activities we have in common with the Father. God's expression is The Word spoken of in the first verses of John. It is the Life and Light of men.

Our expression is the recognition of brotherhood; it is the recognition of the mistake of "mine and thine" in the realization of the truth of "ours."

QUESTIONS

Question. — What is the most valuable thing any school can teach its students?

Ans. — To think independently.

Question. — What is meant by thinking independently?

Ans. — To be able to follow logically, uninfluenced by opinion, a thought-process which unfolds point by point to a conclusion.

Question. — Do we generally associate the word "thinking" with the study of expression?

Ans. — I am afraid not.

Question. — Do we associate thinking with the study of mathematics?

Ans. — We surely do.

Question. — Granting that each subject be

equally well taught, is there a reason why mathematics seems more in the realm of thought than does expression?

Ans. — Only because we have been taught to believe that abstract thinking is the only kind of thinking. Mathematics necessitates abstract thinking, reflective thinking. Expression deals with vital thinking — thought in action.

Question. — Is there a science of expression?

Ans. — There is.

Question. — What is the fundamental principle underlying the science of expression?

Ans. — The cause of all right expression is mental.

Question. — Does this mean that in the art of expression there must be, first of all, a clear mental concept?

Ans. — Yes, but that is only a part of what is meant. The mental

cause is a trinity made up of a concept, a desire and an ability, — all mental.

Question. — Given a mental cause what would be the nature of the embodiment?

Ans. — Mental, of course.

Question. — Can one truthfully conceive of a mental cause producing a physical embodiment?

Ans. — No.

Question. — What is meant by a mental embodiment in the art of expression?

Ans. — The embodiment can be said to be mental when the mental concept is made visible.

Question. — When is this correctly done?

Ans. — When the mental concept is carried out in definite pictures of thought under mental guidance.

Question. — State this in another way.

Ans. — When there is no action of voice

or body that does not spring from vivified thought.

Question. — Are not the voice and body material?

Ans. — They are in themselves, but in proportion to their obedience to thought they cease to be material and become the idea embodied, as does the paint of the painter when it truly serves his vision.

Question. — What is the especial danger attending the use of the voice and body as media?

Ans. — They claim an intelligence of their own, residing in nerve-centers.

Question. — What would this mock intelligence do?

Ans. — It would call attention to its own excitements and sensations.

Question. — What province have voice and body in the art of expression?

Ans. — They have no province save as

they become the obedient servants of the mind.

Question. — What has been a common belief about voice and body?

Ans. — That they *naturally* express what is in the mind.

Question. — Is this true?

Ans. — If the body were truly the spiritual body and we had already proved we were dwelling in the kingdom of Heaven, this would be so. At present we have to choose to be absent from the body and present with truth.

Question. — How can we be absent from the body when so much of our time is given to training it?

Ans. — As we train the body to obey certain fundamental laws, which are mental and spiritual, we are present with the law; thought is directed to a mental process and away from the feelings and sensations of the body. The

body is being guided out of the way.

Question. — When a mental cause produces a mental manifestation or an appeal to mind, we have what?

Ans. — A logical result.

Question. — What do we mean by logic?

Ans. — "The science upon which correct thought depends — the art of attaining by argument the correct conclusion and avoiding a wrong conclusion."

Question. — Would it be logical to assume mental causation if the appeal of the finished product were physical?

Ans. — It would not.

Question. — Is it generally believed that a mental concept is necessary to any expression?

Ans. — It is, but not always proved.

Question. — If the claim for mental causation were made when the result was physical where was the mistake?

Ans. — The mistake was in the process.

Question. — Granting the clear mental concept why did not the expression appeal to mind?

Ans. — Because an untrained agent was trusted to do the right thing.

Question. — Just where was the point of departure from the right process?

Ans. — Just when mental guidance was abandoned for nerve-response (often mistaken for feeling).

Question. — Do the physical agents ever do the right thing in expression if left to themselves?

Ans. — They do not. When left to themselves they follow the path of the least resistance.

Question. — Would the mental concept be made visible, simply because it is clear in the mind of the speaker, if the physical agents have not been trained to be obedient?

Ans. — The mental concept would not only *not* be made clear in expression but would become less clear to the one endeavoring to express it.

Question. — What would be made visible?

Ans. — Some measure of concept (depending upon the speaker's first clarity of thought) together with the confusion resulting from turning a mental concept over to a physical response.

Question. — What would be the least bad effect?

Ans. — The speaker's purpose would be dimmed and blurred.

Question. — What would be the maximum bad effect?

Ans. — The whole appeal would be made to sensation.

Question. — In right expression to what is the appeal made?

Ans. — From mind to mind.

Question. — What relation do concept and expression bear to each other?

Ans. — They are two essential activities of the same thing, each incomplete without the other.

Question. — What is the process of the intelligent study of expression?

Ans. — A constant endeavor to embody the best concept and purpose one has of the literature one desires to interpret, guided by the best artistic judgment one possesses at the time. As the expression becomes more nearly true to one's concept, the inner vision becomes clearer; the clearer vision then demands a clearer embodiment, and so the process unfolds.

Intelligence and Dramatic Art

DURING an interesting discussion of dramatic art, a man of thought and judgment in literary and art matters asked me why in my opinion any high-minded actor is ever willing to impersonate a villain or any character of disreputable sort. The question recalled to my mind the fact that I had once been told that it took a good man to play a villain intelligently, for to a real villain villainy does not appear villainous but desirable and intelligent. An actor who is a man of principle places villainy rightly in the scheme of human life which the play depicts, and recognizes how much of good is contradicted by what the " villain " stands for, and just how unreal is the villain's estimate of values.

The man of principle understands why the villain is introduced into the scheme of the play; that he is the shadow that emphasizes

the lights; that the play is a picture of human life setting forth some struggle between the forces which build up and the forces which strive to pull down.

An actor of vile heart would doubtless consider Iago the most intelligent person in the entire play and although Iago might consider himself so, yet the actor who had the Iago mind could not, it seems to me, intelligently grasp what Shakespeare meant that character to mean in the whole scheme of the tragedy of Othello.

Still the question is, why should a good man want to play bad characters. It may be because he desires to show how ugly villainy really is when viewed in the light of intelligent goodness. The more intelligent the actor the clearer he sees the purpose of the play — the reason for the whole presentation. He sees why the struggle between the forces of good and evil is dramatically set forth. He understands and appreciates the high purpose of the author. An actor of villainous mind is not so intelligent as the actor of high

mind and principle and consequently is not so good a judge of what villainy represents in the picture; to him it may seem luminous but to the good man it stands for blackness — the absence of light.

An intelligent actor does not shrink from playing a detestable character from any fear that the badness of the character's mind will react upon his own and influence him to badness. The character's behavior grows more repugnant to his own mind as he sees deeper and deeper into his motives and aims. The good actor also knows that villainy rightly depicted will never lead an auditor into villainy, so his satisfaction in contributing his artistic bit to the mosaic of the intelligently presented play is not dimmed by false fear.

One might ask the question, why does an actor desire to play any part, good or bad. He surely would not be moved to play the character of a good man hoping it might make him any better than before, for, if he be an intelligent actor, he knows that no such effect would result, any more than playing a

villain's part would in any way corrupt him; nor, if he be intelligent, would he be weak enough to derive pleasure from imagining that the audience would attribute to him, personally, any of the goodness he depicts in the character.

The desire to dramatically interpret any character, worthy or unworthy, springs from an artistic impulse and purpose existent in the actor's mind. *How* he is going to do it is a problem for his intellect to determine; how successfully he is able to carry out his purpose in accordance with his intellectual plan is a problem for his technical ability to answer. Therefore, apart from his technical ability to play the part, there are two activities at work in the actor's mind — his artistic purpose and his intellectual plan. Many an actor has the desire to play a certain part and he may have, at the same time, enough technical skill to act it; if now his artistic intelligence is enlisted; if he does not give over the whole matter to his desires and impulses but guides and directs these motor forces with his intel-

lect, there will result in the impersonation what is called "form." This "form" in the characterization is the only proof possible that the actor has allowed his intellect to take any part whatever in the work.

By "form" is not meant the character's physical appearance or outline but the angles and curves of his thought and feeling; the high-lights and shadows of his acts. Just as the form of a spoken sentence is indicated and fixed by the emphatic word and by the proper subordination of phrases, so in a characterization the "form" is determined by the emphasis of certain characteristics and a proper subordination of others; the resulting high-lights, half-lights and graded shadows give the impression of shape or form and it is that which indicates that intelligence is guiding, and speaks to intelligence in the auditor.

If the actor's artistic purpose be vital enough to demand embodiment and if his intellectual plan be clear and definite and if his voice and body be schooled and trained to facile obedi-

ence to his vital thought, then will the "form" of the characterization be clear and definite and interpretive of the actor's artistic purpose.

Lack of intellect, or the subordination of the intellect to the emotions, which is a mistake too often made by actors and orators, blurs and distorts the form and hence the artistic purpose is lost. Without form there will be no appeal to the intelligence of the auditor and the emotion produced in the auditor will not be a legitimate emotion but one born of sensation.

There are instances where the artist is intellectually and morally undeveloped but so wonderfully trained in the technique of his art, in the use of its forms, its languages, its symbols and its vocabulary, that he is a wonderful *instrument,* and using emotion as his creative starting point rather than intelligence, but using the language of spirit and the forms of intelligence, he may embody an impulse which the auditor must believe started in intelligence and spiritual vision; consequently it often reproduces in the auditor the

legitimate intelligent and spiritual activity, and the auditor credits the performer with possessing and being moved by the same spiritual exaltation by which he himself is moved.

The end, however, for such an artist is a disintegration of the instrument — a loss of power; sensation no longer able to take on the language of spirit but always baldly apparent as sensation making an ineffectual appeal to sensation.

The Right Appeal

ONE afternoon upon returning from a reading by an actor, who presented for the enjoyment of his audience scenes from a play in which he had acted as a star, I was filled with a kind of wonder that the reading was so unsatisfactory. I had enjoyed the acting of this star in this very play but the reading left me quite unmoved, in short, my only feeling at the close of the performance was one of bewilderment that one who could so adequately interpret a character when he occupied the stage and had the freedom of his own art should, when he invaded the realm of the reader, fall so far short. Indeed many mediocre readers could have read the scenes with a greater appeal to the intelligence and to the imagination than did this greater star. Finally I realized that the art of reading was no more understood by the actor than is the art of acting by the reader. The reader, however, realizes his own shortcomings in the

realm of acting, but the actor generally imagines that he quite understands the reader's art, and not understanding the difference in technique, reads in a way not only to dull one's imagination but sometimes to make one wonder if one were not deceived even in his acting.

Out of this experience I arrived at the following conclusions which I have set down rather didactically:

When an intelligent actor reads a play for an audience the dangers are two: first, that he will read each part as he would act it, using too many physical signs of emotions resulting from dramatic situations rather than just the *essential* sign of the emotions resulting from the intelligent realization of the meaning of the situation; or second, recognizing the first danger, he falls into the simple intellectual reading of lines without sufficient emotional response.

In either case the creative imagination of the hearer is not aroused and stimulated; in the first instance, because the appeal is made primarily to the physical eye and ear and the

result is sensation; or, in the second place, too much is left to the intellect alone and the intellect alone never arouses the creative imagination; there must be just enough action and color; there must be present in the reader's interpretation just the few essential signs of the emotion which the understanding both of the lines and of the dramatic situation has developed in the reader. Too many physical signs shut the door in his face; too few fail to get it open, the door being the intelligence of the auditor.

The reader's right appeal is made through the intelligence to the creative imagination; never to the physical senses or to sensation. If the intelligence of the auditor be considered the door of his house the creative imagination is the queen mistress and the senses are her maidservants and menservants. When the artist comes with his appeal and in answer to his knock the door is opened the mistress resents his dallying in the hallway to chuck the parlormaid under the chin; and if he does so dally he will probably get no farther than

the hallway and must be content to get his response from the servants' hall.

Emotions which result from an act of the intelligence or from an appeal to intelligence are legitimate and true. If emotions result without such an appeal they spring from sensation and nerve excitement and are not pleasant to see nor profitable to experience.

Technique and Spontaneity

TO the student of any art how much more attractive is the word spontaneity than the word technique! And this is as it should be. Of what use is technique in any art save as it finally enables one to be spontaneous. Technique is only for the purpose of getting the material out of the way so that the vision in one mind may be shared with the brother mind.

Training in the technique of any art does not mean slavery to convention in that art: it means training into an unerring and facile knowledge of how to handle the tools of that art; lacking which knowledge one's creative thought is never fully free to exercise its spontaneous life.

A student once asked this question: supposing an artist or an actor without training could spontaneously give true expression to a character or to whatever was in the realm of his art, would not such a one be deserving of

greater fame, and would he not produce a stronger revelation than the artist who had to be trained to do the same thing.

I think it can truly be said that there is no record in the world's list of great artists, sculptors, musicians, actors, orators, of any such genius. Whoever has produced anything lasting and worthwhile has done it through hard work and rigorous training.

The freedom and spontaneity of expression which we all crave is bound to be ours sometime and must be ours before we can do any original work, but it will not be the freedom we think it will be, and it will not come to us until we have mastered our tools. Drudgery and patience are essential to that desired end.

The actor who is an adept in the technique of his art can be just as free as he chooses in his manner of depicting a character; that is his own problem and is a question of intelligence and devotion to truth, and he need not be bound by convention. The freedom and spontaneity in art, of which one hears too much, is never meant to apply to the student

or the novice; they are not yet in the realm of art. Students, especially in the art of the spoken word, seem to think they must begin with freedom, when, as a matter of fact, freedom is a result — an arrival; it comes after years of patient obedience and of experience; it really is the last thing to be achieved.

Training in fundamentals will start one well on the way to this freedom; nothing else will. Fundamentals are all an intelligent teacher can rightly claim to teach; three or four simple things, and the explanation of the why and wherefore of these simple things. The rest is all drill and practice, which is the only way these three or four simple things can be taught or can be learned.

Our true art work will be done in the years to come when, with avenues cleared of obstruction, with every agent of expression trained, obedient, and responsive, the creative mind recognizes its own magnificent freedom.

Audience

A FRAGMENT OF A TALK BEFORE A CLASS

ALL art implies and necessitates an audience; if the audience be not present in reality it is always imagined; furthermore, the artist himself comprises the observer as well as the performer. The artistic effort, however, has not reached the art stage until it arrives at a harmonious and beautiful outward form which reflects the purpose and intelligence which produced its harmony and beauty; all previous stages are transitional and are only indicative that growth is going forward, yet during this transitional period — the studio period — the artist has constantly in his mind's eye the vision of the finished form.

We will apply these statements directly to our own art. Here we are at work in the studio; our work is not at the finished stage, ready for the public eye; we are working

towards our ideals; we are clearing away obstructions, ridding ourselves of superfluities, training ourselves in the use of the tools of our craft. It is an interesting fact, but not generally recognized, that in every effort we make in our practice by ourselves, each one of us imagines his audience there before him listening to him, but listening to his *finished production,* although the work is far from being at that stage.

I suppose every one of us here has had the experience of reciting before a few friends some selection on which he has worked faithfully by himself until it seemed to have reached a fit stage for the eyes and ears of the audience and then, with the audience supplied, found the effort was without form and void; not necessarily because the friends said it was so but because he himself heard and saw himself through the ear and eye of his audience, and every tone and expression fell so far short of what he meant it to be or thought it would be that his heart failed him and discouragement followed. This experi-

ence is the result of the presence of listeners who see truly the stage at which your work has arrived: while alone you were the audience but you could not look at your work in process; you looked always at what you wanted it to be. That is right; otherwise there would be no growth.

When the real audience-factor is supplied then you, yourself, see the work in its incompleteness, because you see it with the eyes of your audience and a true perspective of your effort is presented to you and you can intelligently measure the distance between your accomplishment and your ideal.

Here in the class we have the audience right before us, observing all our steps of growth, supplying the real audience-factor, which is so essential to the student of art, because it makes him see clearly the distance between his effort and his ideal and in what direction he is falling short. You of the audience are also being trained in an ability to place the effort of the reader at its proper

stage of development; you soon learn that you are not to criticise the rendering because it has not reached the ideal stage but rather to observe, sympathetically, the processes of growth.

The Word

"IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God."

Art being man's chosen, selected expression, in art man is reflecting what God does in His creation. Art is man's word, the bodying forth of his idea.

Let us apply John's statement to the expressive act of man's mind, which is art: — In the beginning — the inception — of my thought dwelt its expression, and the expression was with my thought, and the expression *was* my thought, the same was in the beginning — the inception — with my thought. This statement, I believe, can be accepted as universally true. In art we are always striving to speak in terms of mind from an understanding to an understanding. Our task, our struggle, as well as our glory and our joy, is to make transparent the muddy avenues of

the flesh, in spite of which we have to speak our word to the listening brother soul, so transparent that the sense and consciousness of the body disappear and the idea, the truth, the love, as they exist in one's thought, are seen in their own fitting embodiment.

But how to do it? All right study of the spoken word has the solution of that problem for its end and aim. All technical training, the constant work with the instrument, which is body and voice, is in order that it, the instrument, may take on the thought's form and color, which is always there, existing in the thought, and with the thought and *is* the thought; and to prevent the substitution of the form and color of physical sensation, which always strives to bury the real thought.

Do not let us get complicated and puzzled. It is all as simple as telling the truth. Given the poem, the character, the scene, the story, we study it until, through the creative imagination, we have made it a statement in words of our own thought and emotion; or, rather, it has awakened into life in our minds the same

thought and emotion of which it is the expression. Then the words are really our words, and possess life, form and color in our minds. Our efforts to give this life, form and color their proper image and outward showing may, at first, result in muddy incoherency and chaotic expression, which almost put our mental life, form and color to sleep, almost bury them, even to our own consciousnesses; but over and over we try, criticising intelligently our own performance, doing away with some action which is the expression of habit and not at all in tune with our purpose, and doing what we know to be right, be it ever so little. Every right expression, be it ever so small, reacts on one's thought and makes the thought clearer and strengthens the emotion. One by one the non-essentials in one's effort at expression are dispensed with, and the essentials given with more and more authority, until we begin slowly to recognize a creation, the inward vision translated into its true form and color.

It is all there in mind; everything that ever

was, is or ever will be. Great literature, great experiences, deep thought, the sight of great art, each and all awaken it; it struggles and yearns and beats for expression.

The ability to make manifest the inward life, in its rightful form and expression, which it eternally possesses, constitutes the artist. Rendering the voice and body obedient servants will not suffice, unless the inward awakening is constantly taking place.

Read great literature. It is the expression of the human heart in chosen terms; it is the picture of life in chosen terms, and will awaken the consciousness of that life in you.

Awake, awake, to your kinship with the eternal! That is the trumpet call of all art.

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